

# IN THE AIR CHAMBER.

By STEPHEN HALLETT.

JOHN BLATCHFORD, civil engineer, sat out in the open, with his eyes resting reflectively on a round instrument, with figures encircling it, and a needle. It resembled an aneroid barometer, but it was not. It was a peculiar air gauge, a Scottish invention, and Blatchford had not seen one of the kind since he had helped build the great bridge at Chequamegon, in Mexico. Then he was a subordinate assistant; now, at eighty-and-twenty, he was engineer of the Marbury Tunnel, under the river of that name, just outside the important manufacturing town of Belchester.

Blatchford's recollections of tropical Chequamegon, although doubtless exciting, were, however, suddenly interrupted by the advent of a young girl, whose footsteps he had not heard, and who now stood timidly before him.

"Did you wish to see me?" he asked, smiling.

"Oh, no, sir," faltered the girl; "I thought—that is—I came with a message to—"

"One of the men, perhaps?"

"Yes."

"You have a brother working down in the air chamber?"

The girl blushed. "Not a brother—a friend."

"Ah! Well, the men will be up shortly for dinner. You had better wait. You see, we are rather short-handed at present, and I am obliged to tend the gauge myself. Sit here and wait."

She seated herself, looking very pretty, Blatchford thought, with her neat, simple attire and thick auburn tresses; and the very first thing that caught her eye was the clock-faced object which Blatchford had called the "gauge." He saw her glance riveted upon it, and good-naturedly undertook to explain that it registered the amount and pressure of air in the working chamber far beneath the river, where, at that moment, seven stalwart men toiled at the tunnel.

"Is it very dangerous?" she asked.

"What—the work? Well, that depends. You see, air seems innocent enough, but it is a power not to be trifled with. Every man down at the bottom of this shaft is working at a pressure of thirty-five pounds to every square inch of him. It is almost like being hugged by a bear. When I press this lever—this way—more air is forced down." He touched one of the levers just below the gauge and pointed to the needle. "There, you see, it is now thirty-six, thirty-seven, thirty-eight, thirty-nine pounds to the square inch; and by a mere touch of my finger it could be forced higher—even up to sixty-five. This is almost strong enough to crush a man."

"How wonderful that mere air should be so strong!" exclaimed the girl. "But what is the use of it—this air?"

"Use? Why, we harness it and make it work. It helps us dig our tunnel under the river, by forcing out the water and mud. Then, besides, it is for the workmen to breathe. But, hello! who are you so pale?"

Kate Maxwell smiled nervously, displaying twin rows of perfect teeth.

"Oh, nothing. Only I was thinking it must be very terrible to work down there. Suppose something was to go wrong with the air-pipes, and they were to get too much or too little air?"

Blatchford, who, young as he was, was familiar with death and danger, shrugged his shoulders.

"We must take risks in every trade. If the men got too little air, the river—or part of it—would pour in and drown them; if they got too much and there was no way for it to escape, it would crush them. But, after all, it is little likely that either of these terrible things could happen, because, you see, it is so carefully regulated and the gauge is so accurate and reliable. Anyone of intelligence could keep the supply at thirty-five pounds, which is as much as a man ought to stand."

He pulled out his watch and looked at the time.

"Hello!" he ejaculated, in surprise, "the men are late in coming up today."

The girl shuddered at his words and cast an ominous glance at the great iron door which barred the entrance to the air lock and led to the working chamber, as it was called, under the river.

"Robert?" formed itself involuntarily on her lips.

Although none knew it, Kate Maxwell's unaccountable misgivings were not without justification. Even as the pair had been talking, seventy feet below where they stood, a terrible scene was being enacted. It had been a struggle for life in the darkness and oppressed atmosphere of the subterranean air chamber, and her lover, Robert Leslie, was one of the actors. A feud had for some time existed between young Leslie and another of the pressure-workers, Edward Dart, and this feud, of which Kate Maxwell was the hapless origin, had of late, for some cause or other, increased, at least on Dart's side, to great intensity.

Dart had always borne a good reputation in Belchester, and was the sole support of a widowed mother; but his temper was none of the best, and it was known that he could be vindictive. It was rumored that his attentions to Kate had extended over a couple of years, and had never been discouraged until the flaxen-haired Leslie appeared on the scene.

At first the feud took the form of sarcasm, but this quickly developed into great bitterness of language. Burly Jim Burns, the foreman of the party, was obliged to act the part of peacemaker a dozen times a day, when, as he put it, "the youngsters' tongues got a waggin'."

"Let him alone, Ned," he would say to Dart; "what do you want to be always warring on Bob?" Or it would be, "Drop it, Bob, or I'll set old Widow Dart on ye. She'll make it lively for ye, I reckon."

On this particular June day, the

teration between the pair began on their way to the tunnel; and Kate, who had heard of the angry dispute, experienced a dread of open trouble between them which greatly affected her spirits all that morning. The dash of gale and repartee continued as the two rivals descended the narrow tube at the base of the shaft into the bowels of the earth; and so far from bettering the situation, Leslie's self-satisfied air and affected carelessness only made matters worse. For he was not without reason for satisfaction, although the truth was known to only one other man in Belchester. Kate Maxwell had promised, on the previous evening, to be his wife. And Edward Dart, the rejected suitor, knew this—knew it from Kate's own lips. This fatal knowledge, fatal to all his hopes and dreams, entered the soul of Edward Dart like a bar of red-hot iron. He was a bigger and stronger man than Leslie, and would relish nothing better than to carry the quarrel to blows. There was something grim, uncanny, in the idea of these two mortal rivals being shut up together in a narrow, dimly lighted box, seventy feet underground, for hours at a stretch.

Once inside the air chamber, they worked for several hours silently. Then, just about noon, Leslie's pick accidentally struck upon Dart's foot. There was an oath, a shuffle, and, like a mastiff, Dart was at Leslie's throat.

In this small space—hardly bigger than a ship's cabin—five men flattened themselves against the sides while Dart and Leslie fought like demons in the darkness, for in the struggle the lamp had been extinguished. Then there was a piercing cry—Dart had got his hands on a pick; he was seemingly about to wield it. But too late! his antagonist forced him backward; he fell with a crash upon a heap of tools, and Dart's arm and ankle were broken, snapping like faggots.

For many weeks there had been peace between the successful and the unsuccessful suitor for the hand of Kate Maxwell. The affair in the air chamber, which had deprived the tunnel of Dart's services, was put down to an accident. Mr. Blatchford never heard of the battle between the two men. Leslie made a point of looking in at the Dart cottage on his way home from work to see how the man with whom he had so long been in

enmity, and with whom he had so lately come to blows, progressed toward recovery. Dart had been rather a favorite of Mr. Blatchford, and was not unpopular among the men, so that there was a general regret at the injury he had sustained.

When the news came, therefore, that the engineer of the works had offered the convalescent man the not very arduous post of lock-tender, Leslie was one of the first to congratulate Dart.

But in her timorous, illogical, womanly fashion, Kate, remembering the conversation she had had with Mr. Blatchford, was not much pleased at the news, though she brought herself at length to laugh at her fears. There was safety in numbers, and after all, it was not likely that even one ten times more vindictive than the man she had rejected as a lover, would injure seven men in order to gratify a grudge to a single one. Besides, did Dart still cherish a grudge? Is so, it was so well concealed that nobody noticed it, not even Kate Maxwell.

But one day, coming across the fields, she observed a small launch in the river just over where the tunnel lay, making rapidly for the other shore, where similar works were also in progress and had been for months. On it she recognized the forms of Burns, Tyler, Pocock, and several of the workmen employed in the tunnel. As the gang were usually at work on the north side of the river at this hour, she stopped an acquaintance, in the vicinity of the tunnel, now approaching completion, and asked him what it meant.

"Oh," said the man, "they're gone over with Mr. Blatchford to work at the other end of the tunnel."

Kate closely scanned the occupants of the boat, and even took out her handkerchief and fluttered it in hope of a reply from her lover. There was no response. Perhaps he was there and did not see her. Disappointed, she turned away, but, wended her way to the head of the north tunnel shaft, thinking he might have been left behind.

As she drew near, the sight that met her gaze sent a chill of apprehension through her, she scarce dared tell herself why. It was only the lock-tender Dart, with his arm still in a sling, studying the indicator. One hand was on the lever. It was the expression of his face which repelled Kate.

"If there is no one down in the air chamber," she thought to herself, "why is he here?"

Quite close she came, without Dart's perceiving her proximity. His whole mind was intent on the gauge, his lips were slightly parted in a most unpleasant smile, and he muttered phrases to himself as he scanned the motion of the needle. The young woman was about to accost him, but before a syllable had left her lips, her eye fell on the figure to which the fatal needle pointed.

The gauge registered already fifty-seven pounds of air to the inch, and was going higher. In other words, that powerful, relentless, modern force, compressed air, was flowing fiercely, yet silently into the chamber far beneath the river, which, did it possess an occupant, would prove perhaps a chamber of death.

"Edward Dart!" cried Kate passionately, pointing to the gauge, "what does that mean?"

The man's hand sprang back from the lever, as to wrench the latter in its socket.

"What are you doing here?" he asked roughly.

"Tell me—is any one inside the lock?"

"Tell you? What for?"

"Because I must—I will know. Because Mr. Blatchford explained to me the working of this lock, and I know

that that pressure is dangerous. I cannot trust you." Then she added, trembling like a leaf, "Where is Robert—Robert Leslie?"

"How do I know?" he sneered, although beads of sweat stood on his brow. His hand was back on the steel rod.

"Then take your hand off that lever, I tell you—reduce that pressure of air!"

Dart made no movement. The needle now pointed to sixty-four. In her frenzy for the supposed safety of her lover, Kate sought to drag Dart away from his post. He seized her instantly with both hands, thus showing that his broken limb had entirely healed, although he had seen fit to hide the cure, for purposes of his own.

"Help! Help!" she screamed. A piece of iron lay near by. She seized it and struck him a blow full on the temples, and the fellow collapsed like an emptied sack.

Then she instantly clutched the right lever and lowered it, gasping and choking in her excitement. She expected it to turn the opposite direction, but to her terror, it continued to revolve as before.

Sixty-five—sixty-six—sixty-seven—Merciful heavens, what should she do?

Instantly she grasped the other lever and exerted all her strength. Every second of suspense seemed an eternity. Kate Maxwell was now firmly convinced that her lover, Robert Leslie, was in the air chamber at the bottom of the shaft. How could she save him? She pictured him fallen upon the slime of the river bed, with the terrible compressed air, gripping his body and slowly crushing it, as a boa constrictor would crush a bound.

To reduce the volume of air would bring relief at once—perhaps save his life. Her lips formed a silent prayer, and as if in answer to that supplication, the needle of the gauge at last wavered in the balance, then began to slowly move in the opposite direction.

When it got to thirty-five she depressed the lever and stay its (the needle's) course. Fifty—forty—thirty—figure by figure it turned slowly. Thank God, the danger was past! If Robert were indeed in the air chamber and lived, his rescue had come in the nick of time.

But horrors—what was this! Although she pressed with all her might, the needle continued to turn, after thirty-five was passed. She sprang at the other lever; she gripped it with both hands; she shrieked for help.

If it reached a certain point, the water would be unchecked, and it would flow into the air-chamber, and Leslie would be drowned like a rat in a trap.

Thirty—twenty-five—twenty-four—twenty-three—twenty-two! Could nothing be done!

Twenty-one—twenty—nineteen—eighteen. In vain the young girl put forth her full remaining strength. Dart's fall must have destroyed the nice mechanism of the instrument, and Kate had thus become, unwittingly, an accessory to her lover's murder. The needle pointed to nine and was still descending when she faired at the door of the lock.

A few moments later, John Blatchford, engineer of the Marbury Tunnel, at last completed after many months of labor, came up the shaft, smiling, followed by his little gang of faithful workmen.

At the spectacle which met their eyes, they stopped short, and Robert Leslie, as pale as death, flung himself beside the recumbent form of his sweetheart, who lay white and still, scarce two feet from the great iron door which barred the way into the tunnel. Several of his comrades turned their attention to Dart, who was subsequently borne home, suffering from shock.

When Kate Maxwell recovered consciousness, she clasped her lover closely. "The gauge," she murmured, stretching out her finger. "I thought you were dead down there. And the levers would not work."

Mr. Blatchford examined the indicator and levers while she spoke. Then he gave a low whistle.

"By Jupiter!" he said quietly, "you turned on less air at the right moment, Mistress Kate. I was out six feet in my reckoning, and the two ends of the tunnel met sooner than I expected. But if we had met, with the pressure here at sixty-five, whether there had been an explosion or not, it would have been rather rough on Leslie. He would have been paralyzed for life. That's the worst of putting a sick man on duty: there's always the risk of a relapse at the wrong moment."

Kate Maxwell, looking up into her lover's face, was silent.—New York Weekly.

**Keep the Mouth Shut.** This peremptory command is to insure proper breathing; that is, breathing through the nose. One should never, unless absolutely necessary, breathe through the mouth. It is the duty of the nose, and it was made for that express purpose and is specially constructed to aid correct breathing, says Farmer's Guide. In the first place, it is provided with tiny hairs that trap dust and impurities that may be in the air and prevent their invading the system. The nose has also what are known as turbinated bones. These act as warming plates to temper the air as it is inhaled. It is further provided with an apparatus for furnishing moisture to the air. All these processes are quite essential before the air is drawn into the lungs, and if the breath is drawn through the mouth many of these essentials are lost. It is an excellent plan to take a good brisk walk every morning and to compel oneself to breathe through the nose all the time. This is a first-rate hygienic practice. At first it may be difficult to do so, but it is worth persisting in, and "practice makes perfect."

**Widowhood in China.** According to the laws of good society in China, young widows should not remarry. Widowhood is therefore held in highest esteem, and the older the widow grows the more agreeable her position comes. Should she reach fifty years, she may, by applying to the Emperor, get a sum of money with which to buy a tablet, on which her virtues are inscribed. The tablet is then placed over the door at the principal entrance to her house.—New York News.



Views of Representative Men.

THE question of road improvement in the United States seems within the past year to have resolved itself into the question of national aid.

When any one is asked to say something on the road question he takes it for granted that you want to know whether he thinks the Government should help build the roads.

Many leading men have recently given their endorsement to this new idea, or rather old idea, for it is now nearly a century since Jefferson signed the first national aid bill. Some of these views are interesting. In a recent speech ex-Senator Butler, of South Carolina, said:

"There is ample constitutional warrant for the improvement of the public roads out of the United States Treasury—as large as there is for the improvement of rivers and harbors or for the support of the agricultural colleges. It is an appropriation from which we would all contribute a share. The Constitution of the United States confers upon Congress the right to establish postoffices and post-roads. Every highway is a post route if the Government chooses to use it. Even in the days of John C. Calhoun, he recommended the distribution of the surplus among the several States, and it was done. I think the best thing for us to do is to go to our Representatives and Senators in Congress and say to them: 'The great demand of modern times is the improvement of the public highways, and the Federal Government should contribute.'"

Governor Montague, of Virginia, is doing everything in his power to secure State legislation for road improvement, and he is also in favor of national aid. He says:

"We should not, however, overlook national aid. I believe this in time will come. The so-called constitutional barrier against national appropriation must fall to the ground. The National Government has constructed public highways unopposed by the strictest constructionist of the Federal Constitution. Moreover, if the National Government can appropriate money to build harbors and to irrigate lands of the States, how much greater is the reason and the right for national aid to public highways, the primal and abiding factors of progress."

Speaking on the same subject, General Nelson A. Miles says:

"The United States Government has appropriated \$480,000,000 for rivers and harbors during the last twenty-two years, and only about \$8,000,000 for the improvement of the country roads. Now it appears to us that it is a fitting time to draw the attention, not only of the people that are immediately interested, but of your representatives, both in the United States and the State legislative bodies, because it is one of the projects that is bound to contribute to your welfare and happiness."

General Fitzhugh Lee, referring to this subject, says:

"If you improve the roads, you begin at the foundation of prosperity for the people. The Government of the United States appropriates now a large sum every year for military purposes. It appropriates money for our mechanical and agricultural colleges. Now, inasmuch as good roads are the basis of prosperity, both in country and city, why should not the Government appropriate an adequate sum of money annually for road improvement?"

Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Colohel J. R. Brigiam recently expressed himself as favorable to national aid. Among other things he said:

"I believe the General Government can help in this work of improving the highways. I am one of those who believe it is always right for the strong arm of the Government to be extended to help her people in every section of this country. The Government could appropriate a certain sum, to be supplemented by appropriations from State and county, and then ask the locality where the road is to be constructed to contribute a certain amount, and bring these funds all together. Then it would not be burdensome upon any one, and the work would be started here, there and everywhere, and in a few short years, without unduly burdening anybody, without impoverishing the nation or the State, we would see good highways extending all over our land, beautifying the country, enriching the people, and adding to their intelligence and happiness in many ways."

**Good Roads and Automobiles.** Recently, in a county in central Pennsylvania, the writer passed over a most excellent piece of highway, built by the State Engineer, under the law now in operation in this State. This piece of good road was soon passed over and then we came to a road nearly as bad as a country road could be. The remark was made to the driver that it would be well to extend the good road. The reply was: "It will not be done. The farmers believe that it will cause automobiles to come this way, and then they cannot send their wives and daughters to town on business. Often it is not convenient for a man to go to town, and the women go, but no man will trust his women to drive on a road frequented by automobiles." I have heard this statement several times recently in this State.

In my own experience I was recently saved only by a good driver. One of these machines came dashing at us at a fearful rate and frightened our horse, but the driver was able to control him. It would not seem proper to permit steam locomotives to run on the public roads as the machines called automobiles are permitted to run, yet one is as locomotive as much as the other, and just as dangerous. In this State it is becoming clear that we must have more stringent laws to regulate them.—Dr. George G. Groff, Lewisburg, Pa., in Tribune Farmer.

**For His Own Good.** The fruit farmer should be an enthusiastic advocate of good roads.

## TO ENTERTAIN GUESTS.

The Novel Game of the Alphabet Party and How It is Played.

A group of young women gave a very novel party recently, and the guests enjoyed the evening's entertainment. It was called an alphabet party, but no pencils or paper were used. All the guests were seated in a row, and each one was called upon to say the alphabet backwards. Five minutes was allowed for each recitation, and any person who failed to run off the letters in that time was dismissed from the group. All those who succeeded in getting through drew lots for a prize, which was a book containing the alphabet in rhyme and picture. Then the guests were asked to say half the alphabet by skipping every other letter.

The fun of this game when done quickly and within the time limit cannot be understood until tried. All those who accomplished the feat drew for the prize, which was a dainty bisque statuette of a schoolboy. The young women were then asked to say the alphabet, having each letter begin a noun of the class named. For instance, if the hostess named "fruit," the player began, "apple, banana," etc. If "boys" began, "Arnold, Bernard, Charles," and so on. Each person failing removed his seat from the circle, and the prize winner in this game was the one who remained in the line when all the other players had failed and had withdrawn. Her reward was a copy of a reading book.

Then the guests were asked to write a nonsense alphabet rhyme. Each person took a letter and wrote concerning a flower, the name of which began with the character chosen. Then the person drawing "A" wrote a verse about the aster.

The last game provoked the most amusement. Every player was given a letter of the alphabet and told to bear it in mind. After everyone had received letters the mistress of ceremonies passed along the line a small box in which were slips of paper. Each slip had written upon it a common noun of some sort. The nouns were very diverse. Thus one slip had "Heroine" upon it and another read "House," "Fish," "Dog," etc. Immediately after receiving the slip a player was obliged to name a proper noun of the class given on the slip and beginning with the letter in the alphabet allotted to him. The player whose letter was "F" and who drew "Dog," was lucky enough to think at once of "Fido." The drawing was continued until all the players but one had failed. The victor received an appropriate prize.

**The Zone Time System.** During the last twenty years a movement has been in progress having for its end a uniform system of time-keeping all over the world, called the universal or zone time system. The principle was expounded by the Astronomer Royal, Mr. Christie, in a lecture at the Royal Institution in 1886. The plan is familiar to any continental traveler. When in Belgium or Spain the railway clocks agree with his watch, if this has been set to Greenwich time, in Germany, Italy or Switzerland the clocks are exactly one hour fast of this, and so on. Not only in Europe, but now in every part of the globe the system is in vogue, and it is announced in the Observatory Magazine for the current month that even such a conservative country as China has adopted it. Along the east coast from Niu-Chwang to Swatow and up the Yang-tze-kiang they are keeping the time of the meridian exactly eight hours east of Greenwich, and the Colonial Office has lately given sanction of this being the legal time of Hong-kong and the other British colonies within the zone. Western China is likely soon to adopt the time seven hours fast on Greenwich, and India and Farther India are about to fall in with the scheme, so that the universal time system now goes round the world, and all the principal nationalities, except France and Ireland, have adopted Greenwich as their prime meridian.—London Telegraph.

**Skeptical as to Jiu-Jitsu.** If we Americans do not have a new craze on hand every week day and on Sunday our surplus energy evaporates. Now comes the jiu-jitsu of Japan. There is no particular harm in it, unless it be overcome. But we have a certificate of reasonable doubt to that it is not what it is cracked up to be. Writers declare it converts an ordinary man into a miracle of activity and strength, rendering a five-foot Jap the equal of seven six-foot Russians. Why, then, do not the Japs in Manchuria lay down their arms and throw the Russians into the sea? If jiu-jitsu is even one-half as wonderful a thing as we hear it is, why don't we have Japs leading in international athletics? Why should any living wrestler of other nationality claim a supremacy? Did you ever hear of a Jap winning a fight in a prize ring with bare fists? Japs are not boxers. The wicked Chinese are the boxers. Matsada Sorakichi was a great wrestler, but won no championships, notwithstanding he was an expert at jiu-jitsu. Are there Jap champions at running, jumping, rowing, fencing, swimming? At juggling (sleight-of-hand) they are supreme; hence they are capable of the tricks of jiu-jitsu, which an American could never acquire.—Marjion News Tribune.

**General Miles and the Raw Recruit.** When General Miles was in Porto Rico, as commanding general of the United States troops, a raw recruit from Tennessee was detailed for duty as his orderly. The recruit knew absolutely nothing of military etiquette, and on receiving orders to report to the commanding general for duty he sauntered over to the tent of that dignitary, where the general was in conference with several staff officers.

Entering the tent without the formality of a salute the Tennesseean remarked: "Well, Miles, did you want to see me?"

General Miles bristled up. "Don't call me Miles," he began irritably. Then the humor of the situation dawned on him and he added with a grim smile: "That's too formal. Call me Nelse."

Then he proceeded to read the recruit a lesson that he never forgot on the amenities of military life.—Milwaukee Sentinel.

## THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON COMMENTS FOR JANUARY 22.

Subject: The First Miracle in Cana, John 4: 1-11—Golden Text, John 4: 34—Memory Verse, 11—Commentary on the Day's Lesson.

1. The marriage in Cana (vs. 1, 2). 1. "On this day, from the time of Philip and Nathanael, or six days from the time John the Baptist had answered the authorities from Jerusalem. It is calculated that Wednesday was the day, it being the usual day for weddings in that country. Widows were married on Thursday. 'A marriage.' Including the marriage feast, which was frequently celebrated for several days. The family was the first divine institution among men, and is the basis of all that has followed."

2. "Jesus was called." Invited. This was natural, especially if His mother was a relative. It was according to custom that a strange Jewish rabbi visiting there should be invited. "Disciples." The disciples were those already mentioned—Andrew, Simon, John, Philip, Nathanael and probably James. Jesus sanctifies true earthly joy. We need not wonder to find the Lord of life and love so happy. He came to sanctify all life—its times of joy and its times of sorrow, and all experience tells us that it is times of gladness which especially need such a sanctifying power. God wants us to be happy. He has given a hundred joys to every sorrow.

3. "When the wine failed" (R. V.). To Eastern hospitality such a mishap would be very undignified and even disgraceful. The family no doubt was poor, extra guests had come and the supply was limited. There has been much discussion as to whether Jesus made wine out of water. Dr. Whiston says: "We see no reason for supposing that the wine of the present occasion was of that kind upon which Scripture places its strongest interdiction" (Prov. 20:1; 23:31; Isa. 22:13). No one can prove that it contained intoxicating qualities, and there are many strong reasons for believing that it was as pure and harmless as the juice of the grape fresh from the vines. Winebibbers need not undertake to fall back on this miracle as an excuse for the gratification of their perverted appetites. If Jesus were in America to-day we know very well what His attitude would be toward the accursed saloon and toward wine at banquets, and in fact toward the banquets as they are now carried on. We may be sure that He never encouraged anything which would lead, as our intoxicating liquors do, to degradation and ruin. "The feast," God probably spoke to Him privately. Although Christ had to yet performed no miracle, yet His mother feels sure that He is able to help them in the present emergency.

4. "Woman." This at first sounds harsh to our ears, but it was equivalent to our saying "Lady," and was a highly respectful and affectionate mode of address. He does not call her "mother," because it was necessary now, as it is now, to show her that He was not Jesus the Son of Mary, but the Christ, the Son of God; that as regarded His great work and mission, His eternal being, the significance of the beautiful relationship which He bore to God, He was not a man, but God. It could not have been done in a manner more decisive, yet more entirely tender. "What have I to do with thee?" What is there in common between us? He cannot longer work in our way. We do not understand the influence directing His present life. "Mine hour." The hour for the manifestation of His glory. Jesus rejects the worldly ambition in Mary's request. She desires a brilliant miracle, as a public sign of His coming. Jesus penetrates this ambitious thought, and traces a boundary for Mary's desires, which she should not more attempt to cross. But this does not prevent His understanding that with this there is something to be done in view of the present difficulty. As soon as all fleshly claim to hold control over, or gain emolument by, His Messianic power was rejected—soon as He was released from her proper position—then was the last obstacle removed; His area of action immediately opened, and the hour to manifest forth His glory by miracle had arrived. "He probably spoke to Him privately, observe His orders without asking questions. Her faith in Him had not weakened. The answer shows what she was expecting Him to do. Let us take her answer as the motto of our lives: 'What wilt thou do?'"

5. "The miracle wrought" (vs. 6-11). 6. "Six waterpots." A large quantity of water was needed at a Jewish banquet because of "the manner of purifying of the Jews"—the hands and feet of guests must be washed, and "the washing of cups and jugs and bottles used on the whole day." "Two or three firkins." A firkin was about nine gallons, therefore the waterpots held between 108 and 162 gallons.

7. "To the brim." We do not know that they were entirely empty, but whatever had been drawn out was replaced. 8. "Draw out." The water for drawing was used in the sense of dip out. "Unto the governor." The president of the banquet. "They bare it." Here faith was required. To put water in the jars required obedience, but to draw that water out and pass it to the chief guest, such as wine made a strong demand on faith.

9. "Knew not." Knew not the miraculous origin of the wine. "Servants—knew." The independent witnesses to the two parts of the miracle establish its reality. The ruler of the feast declares what the element is, the servants knew what it was. 10. "Every man." This is the common custom among men. "Well drunk." Men who have been enough are indifferent as to the quality of the wine set before them. The ruler of the feast is not alluding to the corrupt customs and fashions among men, and not to aught that was going on before his eyes, such as the Lord would have as little sanctioned by His presence as He would have helped it forward by a wonder-work of His own. Sin gives its best—its pleasures and honors—first; its worst—the sorrow, poverty, disgrace and ruin—follow. First harlots and riotous living, then swine. Christ gives first the cross, the race, the battle, then the crown, rest and glory.

11. "Manifested forth His glory." A prophet would manifest the glory of God, but He His own glory, for He was God. The miracles and wonders of Jesus were all signs (1) of Christ's divinity; (2) of His mission as from God; (3) of His good will toward men; (4) of the truths that He taught; (5) of the nature and character of God. "Disciples believed on Him." Their faith was now complete. They were now sure that He had found the Messiah. It was 400 years since the Jews had seen a prophet who could perform miracles. The guests partook of the wine; the disciples had something far better—an increase of faith. Observe the Lord's drink. These men saw God in Christ manifesting His glory.

**Fight With a Big Wildcat.** Farmer John Hillegas this morning discovered that a dozen of his chickens had been killed during the night, and set out with a hound to seek the marauder. The hound soon ran down a wildcat, and after a furious battle went home with his tail between his legs.

Hillegas returned to the scene of the dog's defeat and found the cat perched in a tree. He fired at it and the cat leaped on his shoulders, sinking its teeth and claws into his flesh. He shook it off and tried to strike it with the gun, but only succeeded in breaking the rifle in two, and the cat promptly made a spring for his throat. Wounding it off with his arm, he finally succeeded in striking it with the barrel of the rifle and breaking its back. A second blow beat out the animal's brains. The cat weighed twelve pounds.—Sigmund correspondence Philadelphia Record.

**Pens from Ton of Steel.** About 10,000 gross of pens are produced from a ton of steel.

## EPWORTH LEAGUE LESSONS.

JANUARY TWENTY-SECOND.

How to Win Souls for Christ.—John 1: 40-46.

In this lesson we have the very best of examples of how to win souls in the action of Jesus, the great Teacher. The various ways used to induce the different disciples to follow him are very suggestive of the methods we may use now in bringing souls to Christ. Human nature changes very little, and the inducements offered to these men appeal to men to-day. Read, and reread carefully this chapter, and note the various methods used by the Master.